

MTA-1026

4 November 1981

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, FBIS

THROUGH : Chief, Operations Group

SUBJECT : Monthly Report -- Tel Aviv Bureau -- October 1981

I. OPERATIONS

A. Monitorial/Editorial

The month of October was one of the most memorable in recent years at Tel Aviv owing to the deaths of Egypt's President As-Sadat on the 6th and Israeli war hero Moshe Dayan on the 16th. The assassination of As-Sadat on the 6th resulted in the bureau's remaining open all of that night. The bureau also canceled plans to close during the Yom Kippur observance on the 7th and 8th and maintained normal duty hours even though Israeli radio, television, newspapers and press agencies did not operate on this high holy day. With vehicular traffic prohibited during Yom Kippur, bureau managed normal staffing by housing two monitors in a nearby hotel and assigning teletypists and monitors who live within walking distance. Editor [redacted] worked the evening shift on the 7th and STAT voluntarily slept the night on the couch in the bureau chief's office so as to be able to work the early morning day shift.

Israeli media concentrated great attention on the visit to Egypt to attend As-Sadat's funeral by Prime Minister Begin and his foreign, defense and interior ministers. Begin had meetings with Egyptian President-designate Mubarak and U.S. Secretary of State Haig. Jerusalem radio said the Israelis also had "secret" contacts with leaders of African countries that do not have diplomatic relations with Israel.

On 25 October Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Ali began a 3-day visit to Israel in which he stressed Egypt's determination to continue the peace process with Israel. His trip was capped by the signing of a "normalization" agreement.

For many months the proposed sale of AWACS aircraft to Saudi Arabia had been a prominent issue in Israel. After the sale was finally approved on the 28th, the Israeli cabinet held a special session on 29 October to consider the implications and issued a statement expressing "regret" over the approval and noting that "a new and serious danger" faces Israel. The intense Israeli interest in the AWACS issue was exemplified by IDF radio's broadcasting live reports from Washington during the senate voting. The bureau stayed open briefly past normal closing on the 28th in order to process any possible immediate reaction to the vote.

Although the Hebrew Section had the brunt of the processing action during the month, the Turkish Section also handled some noteworthy items. Ankara radio on the 16th announced that the National Security Council had banned all political parties formed prior to 12 September 1980 when the military takeover occurred. A few hours later Head of State Gen Kenan Evren, in a recorded speech, said the decision to abolish the parties was for the good of the country.

On the 21st, BBC's World Service reported that former Prime Minister Bulent Ecevit had issued a statement criticizing the decision and that Ecevit had been questioned by authorities about it. Although such reports were not broadcast by Ankara radio, the clandestine Voice of the Turkish Communist Party did do so.

On the 23d, Ankara radio broadcast live reports on the opening of the newly formed Consultative Assembly, including a speech by Evren in which he reviewed recent Turkish developments and called for stability. The Consultative Assembly had been hailed by the government as one of the institutions leading to the return of full democracy in Turkey.

B. Lateral Services

At the request of economic officer Harry Stein, acting in his capacity as the embassy language officer, the bureau agreed to make videotape recordings for Hebrew language training at the Foreign Service Institute in Washington. Stein supplies us with cassettes and we record and return them to his office for pouching to FSI. We have thus far recorded four tapes and Stein hopes to establish a regular pipeline of cassettes which will enable us to make about four recordings for FSI each month.

With LRB concurrence, the bureau placed a new subscription to the Middle East DAILY REPORT for passing to Sarah Baror at the Research Department in the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem. When the books begin arriving, we will pass them to the ICA office which sends materials to Ms. Baror on a daily basis.

II. ADMINISTRATION

A. Personnel

Technician a member of the Israeli Defense Forces reserve, began 10 days of active duty on 27 October.

STAT

On 4 October Hebrew monitor [] was promoted to
FSN-9; technician [] to FSN-6; and Turkish monitor []
[] was granted a QSI.

STAT
STAT
STAT

B. Buildings and Grounds

Position No. 1 in the Hebrew section was slightly modified during the month to enlarge the typewriter well to accommodate IBM Selectric-size typewriters.

IV. VISITS

Jordan editor [] briefly visited the bureau while on annual leave in Israel.

STAT



STAT

Attachments: A. Production Report
B. Communications Report